

child study

A quarterly journal of parent education

The man in the family

1957 Annual CSAA Conference report

Irene Josselyn, M.D. . . . M. Robert Gomberg

Otto Klineberg, M.D. . . . Janet M. Rioch, M.D.

J. Louise Despert, M.D. . . . Ray L. Birdwhistell

Summer 1957

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And more to come

In this issue, we take pleasure in presenting papers given at the Annual Conference of CSAA, held this spring. This was an unusually successful conference—the topic of "The Man in the Family" being of great interest today. We must regretfully report one omission—the speech given by Dr. Katherine M. Wolf of the Child Study Center, Yale University, on the very little boy. Due to unavoidable circumstances, Dr. Wolf did not have time to expand the paper as she wished to do before publication of her delightfully informal talk. However, her speech will not be lost permanently to our readers. We look forward to presenting it in a future issue.

The man in the family

Program Statement
of CSAA Annual Conference
March 25, 1957

ATENTION has long been focused on the mother of the family. Detailed knowledge of how mother and child interact has added greatly to our understanding of what goes into the making of a personality.

Yet we also know that a home needs two effective parents and that the clarity and assurance with which the father perceives and carries out his role, equally vital yet in many respects different from the mother's, will profoundly affect his children's true coming of age. By giving scant consideration to the father of the family we may have lost half of the picture, getting an incomplete view of how the boy becomes a man, the girl a woman.

This is a time when women do not see themselves as wives and mothers only, but as human beings with ever widening scope. This trend has had inevitable consequences for men, profoundly affecting a man's image of himself and his relation to others. For many reasons, the father today is living with his children in ways that are new and often confusing.

How are these changes in the father's position reflected in family life, and how are they felt by the children? What are the gains? Are there serious losses? Do masculine and feminine roles in the family tend to become blurred?

Have external forces accelerated these changes, and how may they affect the child's concept of himself? What of the fatherless families, those where death, separation, desertion, or the husband's lengthy absence from home in the army or on business, forces the mother to carry on alone as best she can?

And finally, what do we really mean by those much used, ill-defined words, "masculine" and "feminine"?

The young boy —no kingdom of his own?

By Irene Josselyn, M.D.

His world invaded by girls, who dress and act much as he does, the growing boy sometimes wonders where his special province lies

In discussing the growth of the individual who ultimately becomes the father of the family, it is important to bear in mind that psychological development does not occur in a vacuum. Nor does the biological difference between the two sexes ensure that each one will play a theoretically conceived role in society, since social forces also play an important part in determining the form in which the biological differences are expressed, or in the failure of the biological drive to attain adequate fulfillment.

The battle of the sexes has probably always gone on since Adam and Eve first tasted the fruit of knowledge. At times this battle apparently has been a good, clean fight, with the issues of the struggle clearly drawn. For example, when women wanted to vote and men opposed it, women *knew* they were intelligent enough to do so, and that they could improve the world if they did. Men *knew* women were too stupid to vote and would ruin the world if they did. Even though, once the issue was decided and the clouds of battle cleared, it became evident that both were wrong, the outcome did not change the fact that during the struggle they knew what they were fighting about.

The lines of battle have, at present, become obscured. In spite of the biological and inherent psychological differences between men and women, the actual *sociological* roles are coming more and more to resemble each other. At times it appears that the battle of the sexes has become a battle for the survival of socio-sexual differences in a much more basic way than in the earlier tussles. Sociologically, we seem to be drifting toward a structure made up of he-women and she-men. The drift has not reached serious magnitude, but it is discernible.

It is important to take this drift into consideration as we chart the course of child development. A skillful captain can utilize a drift to bring his boat to the desired destination. So now it is important that we study the navigation problem, in order that we may captain the boat wisely and with alertness; otherwise we may reach a port

Dr. Josselyn is a member of the faculty of the Institute for Psychoanalysis in Chicago and Chairman of the Committee for Training Standards in Child Analysis of the American Psychoanalytical Association. She has written articles for numerous professional journals.

in which, to survive, the sexes will be stripped of all differentiation except their biological characteristics.

Meeting the world beyond home

The pattern of relationships probably begins to form very early, but possibly achieves its greatest momentum between the time the child is psychologically ready to expand his horizons beyond the home and enlarge his emotional involvement beyond the family, up to the psychological age at which he enters adolescence. Up to this time, the child has been finding his place in the family. Now his major psychological task is to take his first and very basic steps towards finding himself in a social world.

While his primary emotional tie remains fixed to the parents, his relationship with them becomes more of a backdrop as he reaches out towards others. His wish to be loved is no longer his wish to be loved only by his parents and other reassuring adults. He also wants to be liked by individuals who are his equals. He also no longer invests all of his own capacity to love in his relationship with family figures. He has a reserve supply which he gradually directs towards individuals of his own age group. He progressively likes them and enjoys being with them. Increasingly he becomes a friend to others and finds that the friendship is responded to in kind.

With this step toward forming emotional ties outside the family orbit, he modifies his patterns of identification. He strives to be like his friends, as well as his parents. In doing this, he struggles with the problem of retaining his past identification while superimposing new ones upon it. It is at this time that parents gradually become aware of both gratifying and alarming changes in the child's behavior. Over the period of the next five years or so he learns to be a "good sport," accepting the concept that it is worth relinquishing some of his own desires in order to share experiences with others. He learns that there are many ways other than temper outbreaks of

achieving desirable ends, despite temporary frustration. As a result, he becomes a relatively reasonable individual.

All of this of course does not occur without some developments that cause the family great concern. His language, for example, may undergo a change. Words that his parents have never used become a part of his vocabulary because they are a part of the vocabulary of the group with whom he is learning to live. And there are many other sources of gratification and alarm during this period when the school age child is striving to find his place in his own age group.

The growth of curiosity

The other significant step that the child takes during this period is finding out about the world that is progressively revealing its distant horizons to him. Curiosity, that first appeared as a questioning about things he saw at the moment, increasingly becomes a curiosity that seeks to recognize the relationship between different aspects of an environment. This typical wish to integrate his learning is often obscured. Because we require a child to go to school, we tend to conclude that what he learns is the result solely of what he is taught. This is only true in part. A child *contributes* to his educational experience because of an inherent urge to make sense out of what he sees. One might comment parenthetically at this point that perhaps too few educators have recognized that the educational process is not necessarily *alien* to the child's own impulses!

The typical child of this age span is very much preoccupied with the facts of reality. For example, the younger child goes through a phase of wanting to see what is inside of something. A child of the age group that we are now talking about wants to see what is inside of something in order to see why it works. Having seen why it works, he is interested in seeing whether he can take it apart and put it together again to prove to himself that his theory is correct.

These two broad characteristics of this age group—first, the gradual development of a capacity for a relationship with others outside the family and, second, the striving to understand reality so that each piece of it can have a logical place in the whole, belong to the psychological patterns of both sexes.

It is of interest that Freud labeled this the "latency" period. He described it by that term because he believed that the infantile sexual impulses which he recognized as significant in the first five years of life became dormant during this time. However, in a culture where infantile sexuality is more readily accepted as a normal part of development, and in which less guilt is aroused in a child because of his infantile sexual feelings, it has become apparent that infantile sexuality does not subside but continues slowly maturing towards an ultimate adult goal. Though perhaps somewhat quiescent, it is not as "latent" as it was originally thought to be.

New confusions arise

While some things about this period have become clearer, our cultural patterns have introduced new confusions into this stage of the child's sexual development. In the past it was easy for a child who was attempting to suppress his knowledge of the basic difference between little boys and girls to rely on obvious surface differences such as the fact that little girls had long hair and wore skirts, while boys had short hair and wore pants. Now little girls have short hair and wear pants! Another sharp line of demarcation between most boys and girls was that the girls played with dolls and the boys with baseballs. Even this differentiation is no longer valid in most social groups—to be sure, little girls still play with dolls, but they are often as good on the baseball field as the little boy next door, and are just as apt to be good sports. There are still hours of free play in which boys and girls are occupied in activities that separate them, but often now they share what used to be typical masculine activities.

The important consideration here is that the boy's concept of himself as a boy, in contrast to his concept of a girl as a girl, is obscured by his play activity. As he explores the social world about him, he sees that boys and girls are not to be sharply delineated. Moreover, adults seem to respect the female's adaptation to the former prerogatives of the male child. The term tomboy, which a generation ago was a tolerant but deprecating description of the girl who shared the interests of boys, is now almost an obsolete word.

Switching the pattern

These observations are true only in *play* activities. Social mores of our time arbitrarily outline another social pattern that sharply differentiates the sexes. Progressively earlier, boys and girls are dating. If, as some claim, parents are chiefly to blame for this, it is possible that parents have encouraged early dating because of an unconscious awareness that today some artificial way to show the social difference between the sexes has to be created. Thus, the little boy who finds the little girl an adequate companion for exploring the swamp, for studying the works of an alarm clock or observing the habits of snakes and mice, is suddenly required to scrub himself clean, dress up and open the door for his little female companion who now appears too weak to open the door herself. Through this social gesture the sexual differentiation becomes sharp, perhaps because of parental and social pressure, but more likely because there is a biological difference between boys and girls which presses for expression.

Friendship between boys and girls where there is an equal sharing of activity and response leads to a mutual identification. This is not entirely negative in its effect. Boys and girls do get along better than they did formerly during this age span. They do develop a mutual respect for each other as living people, sharing experiences. But such a mutual identification inevitably leads to neutralization of the biological dif-

ferences between them. In brief, it would appear that the sexual differences between boys and girls during the latency period are becoming more and more obscured as a result of the social patterns our culture has fostered for this age group.

The adolescent looks for signposts

The step into adolescence is a complex one and the progress through that period tumultuous. The child and the parents are both confused. Inherent in the whole process is the struggle that the boy undergoes to define himself not simply as male, but as a man. He is frightened by the implications of this step. He fears that he will expose himself to dangers which he is incapable of mastering and therefore he reverts periodically to a more immature, dependent relationship. Embarrassed by this failure on his own part to achieve a greater mastery of the world, he then goes to the opposite extreme and asserts noisily to everyone his competence and his capacity to be independent of all nurturing people. Underneath his swing from dependence to aggressive independence there sometimes is a lurking anxiety that he will prove inadequate to assume an adult role, not only in his biological functioning but also in his social functioning as a man in the world. One of the major sources of reassurance for him lies in his close association with others of his age group who are struggling with the same problem. In the sports arena, in bull sessions, and as he struggles to master mathematics and science (the traditional academic area that represents the masculine prerogative of knowing the facts rather than any of the foolish sentimentality of the arts) he gains some confidence that, lying dormant in him, is a real capacity to be a man.

As with the younger boy during latency, so also the adolescent boy in our culture finds that the areas in which he is seeking his security are not really the prerogative solely of men. The one area where he still seems to have an opportunity to draw some differentiation is in a few sports such as

boxing and football—one cannot but view with alarm a possibility that it should be decided that football is a good exercise for girls! While females are still usually excluded from bull sessions, boys are apt to find that if a girl becomes inadvertently a part of such a session, the subject matter does not change too much. Though he may have thought that he could establish his maleness through certain academic pursuits, he is apt to sit next to a girl in school who finds algebra more a fulfillment of herself than the intricacies of crocheting.

Gratifying, but not convincing

In contrast to these aspects of the adolescent's world, the boy is faced with the more formal social situation. In that, he is expected to react as the powerful masculine protector of the helpless, frightened female. This gratifying role apparently seemed valid in the past eras when the boy did not know the potential strength of the girl. Now, because he has shared more living experiences with her, he has discovered how adequate she is to handle the momentous problem of crossing the street. Yet, to meet the demands of social custom and to provide some additional reassurance to himself, he has had to take on a veneer. He pretends that the difference between male and female is still that of the powerful, protecting male and the helpless, unworldly, female.

The differentiation between the feminine and masculine place in a bisexual society has been obscured because our social structure has rapidly progressed towards permitting boys and girls to have a similar childhood. It is easy to say that all the problems this has created, and the confusion that exists at the present time in the relationship between men and women, could be solved by reverting to the past. But the past was obviously the product of a *false* conception of the difference between the sexes. Women are not helpless, inadequate to deal with realities, or less intelligent than men. An artificial solution to a problem is never a lasting one. There is a

difference between men and women psychologically. Their ultimate function in the world is one in which they complement each other rather than being basically like each other.

We cannot block change

Every generation is undoubtedly in a psychological transition between old and new social patterns. The goal should not be to block the change but to explore how it can be used constructively. The particular challenge at the present time is for parents and educators, having recognized that the male and female are different, and that their ultimate functions represent two halves of a whole, to determine how, within our culture, the development and enrichment of those differences can be fostered without depriving either sex of the gratifications that lie in the similarities.

I, for one, cannot see clearly the answer

to this question. I am convinced, however, that we will not answer it by saying the girl should give up the luxury of blue jeans and accept the crippling, inhibiting effect of skirts. Nor do I believe we will solve it by reverting to the idea that it is effeminate for boys to wipe dishes.

The problem is, psychologically, the much subtler one of developing confidence in a child as a biologically determined male or female. I believe we have not yet found a way of attaining this goal. If a male child grows into a man who believes in himself as a man, and finds companionship and sexual compatibility with a woman who believes in herself as a woman, the main cause of the battle of the sexes will disappear. Then, whether a man wipes dishes or not, or a woman is interested in mathematics or not, will no longer be crucial matters threatening the unity of our culture, of which each sex is only a half.

Tomorrow's family

Individual fulfillment offers more
than a return to outworn
concepts of roles for men and women

By M. Robert Gomberg

Director of the Jewish Family Service in New York, and Instructor at Teachers College, Dr. Gomberg draws on first-hand experience in describing the wide variety of family patterns today and the evidence of hopeful new trends.

An underlying theme today in most mental health discussions and forums, including our present discussion of the father's role in the family, is that we are now in a period of integration and synthesis of our psychological perceptions and our appreciation of the crucial role played by social forces in shaping personality.

For a long and probably necessary period of time, the professional microscope was pointed sharply at the inner life of

man. Profound new discoveries were given to us by a giant, Sigmund Freud. Many years were required for us to explore this chapter and begin to comprehend the mysteries it revealed. But perhaps one of the penalties we paid was that during this period our psychological preoccupation with the inner life removed us from the milieu in which it must do its living—from an awareness that the inner life ultimately takes on its meaning and its purpose when it is seen in the setting of the family and the community, and in interaction with various social forces.

We also lost sight of the fact that these social forces are not purely incidental, not simply the background against which individual personality expresses itself, but enter

deeply into the adjustments and maladjustments of human beings. Now we no longer choose between the psychic and the social and create all those arbitrary dualities that attempted to separate man's inner existence from his outer living. We are moving toward an appreciation of how the interaction of the individual and the society itself truly fulfills human purpose in living. We see that society is not an accident, for man has shaped it, and that in turn society contributes to the shaping of man.

The patterns of today

In viewing the influence of society on personality we may look back nostalgically to past historical periods which we have not yet fully outgrown, where the roles of man, woman, and child were more clearly defined. Even though we look forward, we cannot be sure of living to see the full magnificence of that democratic future where true equality of self-fulfillment will finally be achieved, and the battle of the sexes will cease to be the primary struggle. Yet we know that there is no trading with the past nor borrowing from the future, and that, painful as it may be to evolve our own standards, we must do so, if our values are to be attuned to our present world.

Actually, in the daily experience of people who work with families, one finds vignettes of every kind of family. For instance, there is yesterday's family, where the autocratic father still reigns and the passive mother still is the household drudge. Perhaps, in these cases, the father is even a little bit more aggressive and hostile in his autocracy than in the past because he knows that his time is fast waning. Perhaps, too, exaggerated passivity on the part of the mother is not so much the living out of her social role as a reflection of some neurotic disturbance. Still, this kind of family does exist.

Quite often, on the other hand, we find the reverse: the aggressive, possessive, controlling he-woman, and the passive, dependent she-man. Then there are the families where uncertainty reigns, and usually when

that occurs the child is impelled to dominate and exploit the uncertainties. Finally we find, in hopeful numbers, the first glimpses of tomorrow's family, where the woman's maturity, development and self-fulfillment are not a threat to the man, but mean simply that a richer human being brings more to the marriage, to family life, and to parenthood. Where the man is not struggling so hard to establish his masculinity by the outer vestments of authority, there is an inner fulfillment of his native qualities. This, obviously, is a happier soil for the children to grow in, and a more meaningful atmosphere for the fulfillment of family life.

Drawing on past experiences

What does this wide variety of family types mean? Obviously, when the external world is in transition and its value system mixed, unclear and even partly contradictory, it is harder for individuals to define roles and goals. People are thrown back upon the things they learned and experienced earlier in their lives. When these have been good lives, then, in spite of chaotic societal values, a well-functioning family results. In other families, where this background has not given the man an inner sense of identity, or where the woman has been too long exposed to the idea of woman's "lower status," overaggressiveness or passivity may be found.

In looking at today's families for a clue to the future we must also remember that normality will never show itself as similarity, likeness and conformity. There have always been differences, there always will be differences—our job certainly is not to create new stereotypes either for families or individuals. The fact that yesterday's families seem to have had more clearly defined models of the father figure and the mother figure does not necessarily indicate that they were healthier. Perhaps in one sense it used to be easier to function: a child knew what it meant to be "good"—it meant to be quiet and follow the rules; nowadays, a "good" child may be obedient and con-

forming or, according to other definitions, may be one who wrecks the household in the search for self-expression. Yet knowing what one is "supposed to do" is not the whole answer. One day, I am convinced, a new pattern will emerge that will both guide us from without and strengthen us from within as we travel in this journey toward a healthier version of psychological democracy within the family.

New directions

Let us look briefly at some of the principal changes that have taken place recently, to get some idea of what this pattern may be, and what problems it must resolve. Obviously, a very important social development has been the change in the role and status of women. While this trend toward greater equality between the sexes has within it the seeds of the healthiest type of self-fulfillment, it presents a number of neurotic detours with which we are all familiar. But we must not lose sight of the forest for the trees. The fact that some women confuse equality with the sameness of the sexes and resent their femininity as an unkind and unfair obstacle in the competition with men, is not an indictment of the trend.

The family is a very sensitive instrument that must be viewed as a social organism that has a personality, and that is something more than the simple combination of the mother plus the father plus the child. The new compound creates something unique. It would be impossible for the mother and wife to change her role dramatically without there being corresponding changes in the man. On the surface, one might see the woman's expanding, fulfilling development as causing a contracting role for the man. As the woman moves away from yesterday's constricted image of mother and homemaker and begins to develop all her various capacities, the man, as head of the house, master of discipline, final arbiter, judge, coach, obviously has to give ground. The question then becomes, is this a kind of attrition for the man? Does it mean that except in his capacity as a

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kind of mother's helper, father has no definite role of his own?

Actually, I think all of us realize that the opportunities for a fuller personal development are just as great for the man as for the woman. The stereotype of the strong head of the house must have been a kind of strait jacket for a great many men. The inner self-estimate of what he was like, what he felt, what he preferred to be, how he would behave, what his preferences were, may have led some men to a comfortable acceptance of the stereotyped role of the father and head of the house. But sometimes this stereotype was an ill-fitting garment which created all kinds of anxieties and conflicts, a fact which we forget when we think with envy of the former "man in the family."

Being ourselves

Thus the roles, the values, the standards that emerge for both men and women in our present society will have to be more consonant with what we are *truly like*, in ourselves and within the opportunities and the possibilities of our present society. If the man develops his own inner self-confidence, his own affirmative self-image, he will vary inevitably from his neighbor. The man next door may seem outwardly more forceful, but the individual who chooses a less aggressive approach may be fully adequate within himself and carry his responsibilities effectively within the home.

We might do well to think also of the family as a personality capable of infinite variation. For too long, the psychological sciences, despite their profound and helpful insights, used a language and method that was capable of measuring only the individual. How people combined in the very intimate relationships of the family was deduced, but not studied or understood. The tendency in diagnosing and evaluating problems was to treat the individual problems of the "sicker" person with the hope that as these were worked out, somehow his or her relationship with other family members would improve.

Frequently it did work out this way, but often it did not. We have come to recognize that the interaction, the *quality* of the relationship between people, is an additional factor in family life that must also be evaluated. We have found out many interesting and unexpected things in this area over the years. Sometimes we have discovered that relatively well-adjusted and stable people can combine to make a poor marriage and perhaps poor parents. Conversely, it is possible for two people who, on individual examination, show certain kinds of personality problems and difficulties, to have a relatively effective marriage and provide a sound background for the rearing of the children—somehow, in their selection of each other, in their combination with each other, they have developed ways of offsetting each other's difficulties and of strengthening each other. Some people, of course, combine to their mutual destruction. But the fact remains that to appraise the family on the basis of separate individuals, without also understanding the social personality of the family, ignores the ability of people to serve and strengthen each other, as well as to hurt each other.

The combinations of personalities

Now there is a tremendous number of ways in which different personalities can combine. We can never recommend to one family that it follow in the footsteps of another family just because the latter has reached some kind of balance that works for them. Nor can we point to one kind of combination as an abstract model of the norm. It is interesting to note that people are most like each other when they approach severe mental disease: when they move into the psychoses, their symptoms tend to be quite similar. It is at the other end of the scale, when they approximate good functioning and good balance, that people are most markedly different from each other.

The patterns of behavior, of man's adaptation and accommodation to society, of men and women to each other, of parents

to children, cannot be forced into some preconceived mold. And this same warning holds good in considering the role of the husband and father today. To have given up one set of outmoded criteria only to produce a new strait jacket—the concept of the male who participates with his wife in all manner of things from household chores to PTA meetings—is to set up a new and subtle checklist of the “right” characteristics for all men.

Society may determine how a male is supposed to behave in any one given period in history; society cannot determine who will be the male and who will be the female. Along with this biological truth, there are certain psychological values that are quite unalterable. Society may clarify or confuse sex identity, but the maleness, or femaleness, is there, and it has within it an urge to grow, as all things in nature want to grow. It may be blocked, it may be obstructed, but it is remarkable to see how that inner urge seeks its own fulfillment. Place a seed under a rock and it will climb around the rock and turn its face to the sun. So too with a child. We may hinder some of the maleness of a boy by the kind of clothes or manners or other outward behavior we insist upon, but there is some force on his side to help him achieve his male identity.

The importance of roles dwindling

We are moving towards an era when it will be progressively less important to distinguish between male and female on the basis of social activity and responsibility. When the emphasis is put on inner personal fulfillment, it will be less important whether the social roles are diametrically opposed or overlap than that the inner image of oneself be that of a person who is respected, loved, wanted. If a small child in his littleness feels wanted and respected, it is natural for him as he grows to know himself as a loved male child, protected by a family that supports his values, even if society is in transition and is confused in some of its dictates. He will find the

**By the Director of
Shaker Village Work Group**

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strength from within, buttressed by the family, to find his own way and to play out his own role. Conversely, an individual may learn the stereotypes of masculinity. But if he has acquired them in a family that is angry, frightened, and competitive, though he sounds assertive and male, he may be inwardly frightened and need the loud sound of yesterday's maleness to disguise an inner hollowness.

And so the family stands once again as the soil, the matrix in which the individual, male or female, finds his or her own identity. It is the essential emotional togetherness of the family which creates the sense of comfort and protection from which the child may gradually and wholesomely be weaned, growing in strength to face the larger world with courage and conviction. With the readmission of the father as a crucial entity, there is an expanding horizon and new enrichment for the family.

Yet too much togetherness can mean smothering—which could once again obscure the differences between people. Schopenhauer wrote of the dilemma of the porcupines, whose problem in the winter is to huddle close enough together to keep out the cold without stabbing each other with their quills. To achieve that ideal distance where you are close enough together to be warm, yet far enough apart to be yourself according to your own nature, is indeed an accomplishment—and not only for the porcupines!

History gives us little guidance to real cooperation between the sexes. The chance to achieve it is a dawning opportunity

By Otto Klineberg, M.D.

The father's role—

now and in the past

Dr. Klineberg is Professor of Psychology at Columbia University. From 1948-1955 he directed research projects for UNESCO, and formerly taught at Sarah Lawrence College. Among his numerous published works are *Race Differences* and *Social Psychology*.

There is a story, probably untrue, of an incident which occurred during the early struggles of the English suffragettes. Once, after these women had been especially troublesome, several of them, including their leader Sylvia Pankhurst, were thrown into jail. One of the group was a young girl of about seventeen, for whom this was a new and terrifying experience, and as the jail door closed, she burst into tears. Sylvia Pankhurst put her arm around the girl, and said to her, "Courage, my dear. Pray to God. *She* will help you!"

This may seem a little extreme to most of us, but we are confronted in recent history by such a radical change in the status of women, and therefore, relatively, in the status of men, that a little stocktaking may not be out of order. We still hear occasional references to women as "the largest minority in the world," a minority not in the sense of numbers, of course, but in the sense of status. A recent book on *Psychotherapy and Culture Conflict*, in American subcultures, by Georgene Seward, devotes a chapter to women from this point of view. On the other hand, we have been exposed to a whole series of publications

which seem to point in the opposite direction, and to imply that in American society the situation has been reversed; minority status has changed its sex. One anthropologist even speaks of "womb envy" to indicate the feelings of inferiority experienced by certain males.

If we look for a moment at other cultures, we find that they all make distinctions between the roles of men and women, but that almost invariably it is the man to whom superior status is ascribed. The impression we have of primitive man usually includes a picture of a dominant male with as many female "slaves" or "chattels" as he can handle; his wooing is popularly considered to have consisted of a stout club and a good grip on the lady's hair as he dragged her forcibly to his own domicile. I still remember my shock and disillusionment when the professor in my first course in anthropology indicated that this was merely a symbolic capture, which occurred only when the lady said yes. But in any case, the fact remains that in the primitive societies for which we have data, it was the men who ruled and the women who (usually) obeyed.

Anthropologists tell us that there is nowhere, and that there probably never has been—in spite of the Amazon legend—true matriarchy, a true “rule by women.” They have come close to it in some cases. The Iroquois political structure has been referred to as a matriarchy, for example—that is, the women chose the chief; but the chief was always a man. The women were the kingmakers, but not the rulers. The “power behind the throne” may have been the woman’s as it obviously has been in many other times and places; her actual and official seat was invariably a little lower than that of the man over whom she wielded her influence. Anthropologists who have surveyed such data point to the greater physical strength of men, on the average, as the most important single factor determining man’s superior status.

Physical strength, however, is considerably less important under present social conditions than when the world was younger. The race is not always to the strong, nor even to the swift, since so many other qualities of intelligence and personality are more pertinent to today’s achievement, and man’s superiority in strength ceases to have much significance. Yet there has been in most countries a sort of “social lag” which seems to have kept men in power. This appears especially true in the countries of the Middle East, where religious beliefs (codified by men, of course) constitute serious barriers to the complete emancipation of women. In the Japanese hierarchy of personal interrelationships, the man has clearly ranked higher than the woman in his own family; and in Switzerland, women are not yet permitted to vote.

The case of Germany is particularly interesting from this viewpoint, because it has been suggested that the strict authority wielded by the father in the German family served as the origin and the prototype of the authoritarianism which culminated in the Nazi system: Germany was said to be essentially a *Father Land*, as in Bertram Schaffner’s book which bears that title.

This description may be somewhat exag-

gerated, but it contains at least some elements of truth. For example, Schaffner gave a group of Germans a series of incomplete sentences, one of which read “The opposition of a young man against his father is” Among the phrases offered as appropriate endings to this sentence were many such as, “the result of poor training,” “to be rejected; he is, and remains, the father,” “to be condemned,” “a lack of character,” “a lack of filial piety.” In some cases, to be sure, quite a different attitude was suggested by such answers as “the sign of beginning independence,” “the natural behavior of youth,” “the sign of a need for liberty and progress in each younger generation.” This latter type of response, however, represented a minority view.

Woman’s inferiority discarded

Of course, these patterns of male dominance are changing, in our country certainly, and in many other countries as well. Women everywhere, even in the countries mentioned above, are gradually assuming greater responsibility in many different directions—in education, politics, economic life, and as figures of authority in the family. In the United States, this trend has perhaps reached its greatest realization. For one thing, the notion that women are inferior to men, while it may persist in the minds of many, has dropped out of sight in American social science. It would be almost as much as his academic life was worth for a psychologist to report results showing a general sex difference in intelligence. In fact, if a test of general intelligence showed such a difference it would probably be dropped from the psychologist’s armament as unfair and unsound.

One social scientist has gone so far as to say that the reverse is true. Thus Ashley Montagu writes¹ that “the scientific fact is that women are naturally superior to men.” He states further that the female is constitutionally stronger, healthier, a better shock absorber, and at least equal in intelligence.

¹ In the *UNESCO Courier* for January, 1956

He goes on to say that the intelligence that the world stands most in need of at the present time—indeed, at any time—is the intelligence with which women are most abundantly equipped. If this view of Ashley Montagu's becomes a trend, it may be necessary for some international organization like UNESCO, which is fighting discriminations of all kinds with the tools of science and education, to come to the defense of the male of the species.

Research on sex differences

On the qualitative side, however, a number of differences have been indicated as a result of research. Margaret Mead's well-known investigations have suggested that though there are personality differences between the sexes in most, if not all, cultures, the exact nature of the differences may vary considerably; in one group for instance, the man may be the more assertive and aggressive; in another, the woman.

Within our own society, a large amount of research has been conducted, although the results cannot be extended to men and women generally without further verification. Intelligence tests indicate no differences, on the average, though sub-tests indicate that women show a superiority in language ability, which reveals itself early in life, and apparently persists. It may be added that women have a much lower incidence of speech disabilities, such as stuttering, some surveys showing as much as ten times as many stutterers among males.

Boys, on the other hand, are superior in motor and mechanical ability as well as in tests involving mazes, construction, and special abilities in general. They show a slight inferiority in memory. In all of these comparisons, the overlapping is tremendous. There are many more delinquents and criminals among males, and a substantially greater number of males than females is committed to mental hospitals. There is no real evidence as to whether any of the above differences have a basis in heredity.

The most careful and elaborate experi-

mental study of sex differences in personality is that of Terman and Miles,² who devised a "masculinity-femininity index" based upon their examination of many hundreds of subjects. The results indicate that the males, in the main group studied, showed a distinctive interest in exploit and adventure, in outdoor and physically strenuous occupations, in machinery and tools, in science, in physical phenomena, and invention; usually also in business and commerce. The females showed more interest in domestic affairs and in aesthetic objects and occupations. They preferred more sedentary and indoor occupations, and those more directly ministrative, particularly to the young, the helpless, the distressed.

The application of the masculinity-femininity index to men and women in various occupations reveals some interesting results. Among the most masculine men were engineers and architects; among the least masculine were journalists, artists, and clergymen. An unexplained result was that firemen and policemen were also close to the lower end of the range of scores for masculinity. Among women, domestic servants attained the highest feminine scores, and high school and college teachers the lowest. Needless to say, the overlapping between the various occupational groups was very great. The fact that such overlapping can be demonstrated on almost every measure has suggested that any strict line of demarcation between the sexes in connection with education, economic opportunity, occupational selection, even role in general, is unjustified.

Still more important for our present purposes, however, is the position of the man (and woman) in the contemporary American family. We are all familiar with at least some of the extensive literature which has stressed the important role of women in our society, from the "Momism" of E. A. Strecker and Philip Wylie, to Geoffrey Gorer's insistence in *The American People* that American males are so surrounded and dominated by women that they develop a

² *Sex and Personality*, 1936

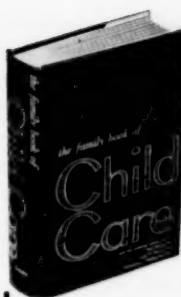
feminine superego (whatever that may mean).

The relatively high status of women is not a new phenomenon in this country. Henry S. Commager in his *America in Perspective: the United States through Foreign Eyes* reports that foreign observers of the American scene throughout history were in agreement regarding the high position held by women in this country; over one hundred commentators remarked that America is the land of chivalry, so far as the treatment of women by men is concerned. Psychologists and psychiatrists, too, have stressed (perhaps overstressed) the central role of the mother in the personality development of the child.

The Importance of "fathering"

The emphasis on the part played by the mother is reflected in the large body of research devoted to the devastating effect produced by maternal deprivation. R. A. Spitz, Margaret Ribble, John Bowlby, Lois Murphy and a host of others, remind us in one way or another of the importance of "mothering." But does it matter if there is no "fathering"? Are there any effects of "father deprivation"? One, and only one, empirical investigation has come to my attention in which this situation is analyzed. Lois M. Stolz studied a number of children whose fathers had been absent for some years in military service. The effects on the children, though not nearly so serious as those reported by Spitz and others, were nevertheless sufficiently striking to indicate that the absence of a father from the home during the child's early years may also be a source of real frustration and faulty personality development, and creates definite problems of adjustment when the father returns home.

What is the role of the father in the American family? This was much easier to define in the past than it is now. Oversimplifying a little, one might have said not so long ago that in addition to loving his wife and children, he was expected to be the breadwinner, the disciplinarian, and the



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dominant voice in all important decisions which affected the family. Now he shares all these roles with his wife, but with no clear picture of how much sharing should be accomplished.

On the whole, however, American men seem reasonably content with their new role. In a study by R. J. Tasch in 1952, the fathers who were interviewed saw themselves as active participants in the daily care, disciplining, teaching, and play of their children. They did regard it as difficult, however, to do their job as breadwinners (or principal breadwinners) and still find time for these new functions and activities. They did *not* regard it as part of their role to serve as models for their sons, although they may have done this without being aware of it. As one reads some of the detailed case histories in *Crestwood Heights*³, however, one is struck by the wide variations in the role of the father. Even in homes of comparable socio-economic status, there seems to be a great deal of uncertainty regarding just what that role should be.

Findings from Australia

In a community study carried out in part of the Australian city of Melbourne, the investigators interviewed 80 families regarding household duties carried out by the man, those carried out by the woman, and by both together. No man took sole responsibility for ironing, dusting or washing clothes, but joined with his wife in these activities in about 20 to 30 percent of the cases. In four percent of the cases, the husband alone did the dishes, and did them together with his wife in an additional 60 percent. He prepared his children's breakfast in six percent of the cases, and helped his wife do so in an additional 22 percent. He chopped wood in 69 percent, his wife did this in one percent, and they did it together in 30 percent of the families interviewed. Eighty percent of the men mowed the lawn, as compared with two percent of

Hi Neighbor! program

UNICEF's new Hi Neighbor! program kit offers a wealth of stimulating ideas to summer camp and recreation leaders seeking to bring to American children a closer understanding of their contemporaries around the world. The 1957 packet of crafts and songs, games, puzzles, maps, posters and an activities manual focuses on five U.N. countries—Guatemala, Iraq, Nigeria, Philippines, Yugoslavia. In addition to the packet (\$1.00), the 1957 Hi Neighbor! program has added a 10-inch LP record of songs and dances from the five feature countries (\$3.00) and a related film strip (\$1.00). All three items may be ordered from the United States Committee for UNICEF, United Nations, New York.

the women, and in 18 percent of the cases, responsibility for the lawn was shared by husband and wife.

It looks as if the "confusion of roles" had been carried just about as far in Australia as in the United States, although there is still a partial division of labor along traditional, old-fashioned lines. As far as authority is concerned, a study of an Australian rural community showed that it is the father who is regarded as the major authority figure, but that the actual authority is more frequently in the hands of the mother. This appeared to be true also, but less markedly so, in the case of the urban group.

These two Australian studies raise in clear form the problem of the differences between the various groups or sub-cultures which make up a complex society like our own. The father's role will not be quite the same in the city and in the country, in the middle class and in the working class, in an Italian and in a Negro group. In the Negro group, for example, the mother has long been regarded as holding a central position. It would be curious if the average white American family should move closer, for different reasons, to the typical Negro pattern of household relationships. At the same time, it is highly probable that the Negro pattern is changing in the opposite direction, becoming more like that of the average white family. There may be a convergence toward something in between.

³ By John Seeley and his colleagues.

But *where* between? Here we are handicapped by the lack of objective studies which would give us an adequate basis for describing the role which the man actually plays in the American family. Research in this area is badly needed. As recently as 1956, Irene M. Josselyn wrote in the *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry* urging that "We should learn a great deal more of the deeper, subtler meanings of the potentialities in the father-child relationship"; that we must "study intensively the meaning of fatherliness, paralleling our study of motherliness, in order to understand the desirable components of a family unit."

In a period of rapid social change, uncertainty about the nature of fatherliness is to be expected, and consequently a great range of interpretations among fathers as to just what is expected of them. The Australian material shows this clearly, and there is no reason to believe that the variety of interpretations would be smaller in American families.

Effects on the child

This uncertainty regarding the role of the father is sometimes said to have certain harmful effects on the development of the child, particularly the boy, on the ground that he has no clear model on which to pattern his own behavior. The expectation seems to be that since man now performs a portion of the tasks traditionally associated with women—bathing the baby, washing the dishes, etc.—his son will not know what it means to be a man. Confusion may be a little worse confounded now that the traditional role of breadwinner is no longer exclusively man's; the recent report on *Woman Power* by the National Manpower Council by Eli Ginzberg and his associates shows the great extent to which women, even women with young children, have entered the American labor force. How can a boy learn about psychological and social "maleness" under these conditions?

The solution of this problem I shall leave to others, but there is one aspect of it to

which I should like to draw attention. We have in the past, I believe, exaggerated the psychological differences between men and women, few of which are rooted in biology or anatomy. This has had a number of unfortunate consequences, among others the belief of males in their superiority—a belief shared by many women, who too often have felt that they had to be "like men" if they wished to compete against them. One is reminded of de Goncourt's dictum: "There are no women of genius; all the women of genius are men." The fact that George Sand seems to have regarded it as necessary to take a man's name and wear men's clothes is perhaps an illustration of this tendency. Of course that was a long time ago, but the vestiges of that belief have not entirely disappeared. Certainly the prejudice against women, and against any signs of femininity in men has *not* disappeared. Strikingly, there is evidence that this form of prejudice is particularly common in men who have marked authoritarian characteristics, usually those who are prejudiced against minority groups in general.

Cooperation vs. "battle"

In a family where the roles of men and women are not so sharply separated, and where many household tasks are shared to a greater or less extent, the notions of superiority are hard to maintain. The pattern of sharing in tasks and in decisions, makes for equality, and this in turn leads to further sharing. The growing boy and girl in such a home learn more easily to accept that equality than did their parents, and to prepare more fully for participation in a world characterized by cooperation rather than by "the battle of the sexes." If the process goes too far, and man's role is regarded as less important—and that has happened in some cases—we are as badly off as before, only in reverse. One is reminded of the statement that "All men are equal, but some are more equal than others." It is difficult to state with any certainty just how far this process has gone and how frequently it is true of families in



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our society. Here again, we need more objective data than are at present at our disposal—it may just possibly be a little more common in comic strips and television shows than in real life.

Time for reassessment

It is time to reassess the role of the man in the American family. While I was writing out these remarks, my seventeen-year-old son asked me what I was doing. I told him that I was preparing a talk on man's place in the American home. "Oh," he said, "the way things are going now, you could just turn in a blank page." Of course he laughed as he said it. His remark, however, in one form or another, is heard too often for comfort—for man's comfort, that is. We laugh, but with a slightly hollow sound.

We are getting a little tired of "Momism"—but we don't want to exchange it for a "neo-Pop-ism." What we need rather is a recognition that bringing up children is a partnership of equals. There are signs that psychiatrists, psychologists, social workers, and specialists on the family are becoming more aware of the part men play, and that they have decided that women should not receive all the credit—nor all the blame. We have almost given up saying that "woman's place is in the home." We are beginning, however, to analyze man's place in the home, and to insist that he does have a place in it. Nor is that place irrelevant to the healthy development of the child.

Equality and health

The family is a cooperative enterprise for which it is difficult to lay down rules, because each family needs to work out its own ways for solving its own problems. One conclusion, however, seems pretty reasonable. It is to the effect that excessive authoritarianism has unhappy consequences, whether it wears skirts or trousers, and that the ideal of equal rights and equal responsibilities is pertinent not only to a healthy democracy, but also to a healthy family.

Trustee, Fellow and faculty member of the William Alanson White Institute, Dr. Rioch was formerly Director of Pediatrics at the Babies Hospital, Columbia Medical Center, and is now Attending Physician in Psychiatry at the Roosevelt Hospital in New York.

The impact of uncertainty on human relations

By Janet MacKenzie Rioch, M.D.

The constant effort to adjust to change,
rather than conflicts between the
sexes, is the root of many family tensions

It is not my intention here to review the ground already so vastly written about, regarding males and females, but rather to propose a different orientation to the problem of men and women as I see it today. So much self-consciousness has arisen that both men and women are blocked in spontaneous behavior. This naturally affects the children in the family, who very frequently are the keenest judges of artificiality. The parents' concern about "how they are doing" and "is it right?" creates more anxiety than aptitude. Moreover, the very fact of change and uncertainty gives rise to further anxiety and feelings of guilt in parents because they do not have orderly answers and patterns to offer their children. We need to recognize more than ever before that being uncertain is no indication of being inferior.

The traditionally assigned roles of men and women have been modified to a large extent by the exigencies of modern life, and there is considerable overlap in these previously different roles. But this fact in itself does not need to affect the partners adversely, if they are able to see themselves as people rather than sexual prototypes.

The need for scientific thinking and scientific method among leaders in the field

of human relations has never been greater than now. Its importance is acutely enhanced by the rapidity of mass communication. An opinion voiced by an "expert" regarding one or another aspect of the human being is quickly disseminated and often given the emphasis, not of an opinion, but of a piece of factual information. Again, partial truths are sometimes reproduced as if they were statements covering an entire subject, and any such interpretation is quickly seized upon because the anxiety of the group causes an ever-increasing demand for certainty.

The question "What is normal?" comes up again and again. In a situation of change and anxiety, one phenomenon seems to occur fairly regularly, and that is the effort to find security in conformity. With the breakdown of boundaries set by tradition, there comes a tendency to substitute for vertical security of caste and custom a sort-of-horizontal security in being all alike. The anxieties which we observe in adolescent groups today foster this need to conform. Parents, too, feel a similar urgency, which can easily be manipulated by any propaganda group, whether it be advertising or political, or whatever else.

It would be disastrous for the potentially vital and productive personalities of this great country if the leaders in the mental health program were to fall prey to the temptation to be a propaganda group, and to assist in the process of manipulating people in the direction of "mental health conformity." Already too much has been said about "what is normal." Too often we read about the "average man" or the "average woman," the subtle implication being that what is average, is normal.

The danger of generalizations

Those of you who read Dr. Mead's article, "American Man in a Woman's World" in a recent Sunday *New York Times Magazine* section, will recall the cartoon illustrating the article. It shows a row of identical houses, with identical men going off to work, tied by identical ropes to their homes. The cartoon illustrated a part of the point of the article. Yet in its own way it also suggests the current mode of thinking which tends to assume common characteristics in all the individuals in a group. Actually if we were to endow these cartoon figures with life, we might possibly find that some of them declined to fit into the formula of the unhappy male tethered by his wife's apron strings. Some of these men might be veterans who had already endured hazard and loneliness overseas and were more than glad to have a stable home of which they were a vital part. Others, also without doubts about their manhood, and with no necessity to "prove" anything, might find providing for, and living actively with, their families the most satisfying way of life in these changing times. Some men may be over-impressed by the requirements to "spend time with their children." But others race off, only too glad to get away, the binding rope being nothing but a fine-spun thread of gossamer. Each generality will be splintered by the many exceptions.

We may cry out against conformity, but are we not at the same time unwittingly joining the ranks of the propagandists and mass manipulators if we succumb to static

concepts of "average" and "normal"? In the field of electronics, discoveries are being made so rapidly that plans for a second revision of a handbook are begun before the first edition is published. In the highly complex field of interpersonal relationships, also, there must be a stepped-up program of research which applies as of today, rather than yesterday or the day before.

An organism depends for survival upon its adaptability. There is no standard of behavior and no norm that can be applied in a blanket fashion to human beings, without regard to their particular and individual experiences and potentialities. Without the possibility of wide variations in patterns of behavior we would have a robot-like group, inflexible, temporarily strong, but unable to accommodate to change—witness the convenient dinosaur, as an example.

Moreover, we see the futility of generalized rules because, as Dr. Hilde Bruch has pointed out, advice given to parents is received and applied according to each person's frame of reference. In my experience I might mention the parent who was an obsessively driving and perfectionistic person. When I made a suggestion that he let up a bit on pushing himself and others, he responded: "Well, I'll go straight home and try like hell to take it easy." Thus, indiscriminate advice cannot work and when applied it leads in many cases to frustration and further anxiety.

"Advice giving"

In the newly discovered drugs we find an interesting, though not entirely accurate, analogy to the problem of "advice giving" in the area of mental health. We have sedative pills and "wake-up" pills: you take first one and then the other. It turns out that it saves time and trouble to take them both at once, or even better, in one blended pill. A physician of my acquaintance raised the pertinent question that if the drugs balance each other—why take anything at all?

Not long ago, parents were exhorted to

spend more time with their children. When it became apparent that anxiety and guilt were seriously increased if parents could not follow this rule, another piece of advice was given. This time, emphasis was placed on the quality, rather than the quantity of time spent. But now, new anxieties are raised, as the parents wonder whether their time with their children is spent in the *right way*.

What is anxiety?

I have mentioned the term anxiety rather often and have pointed to the tendency of people to turn to experts for relief. Anxiety may be defined, rather broadly, as that state of extreme discomfort which arises from the feeling of not being approved of, either by oneself and/or by others. In social groups in the past, where tradition firmly dictated behavior, anxiety could be readily avoided by conformity. Modes of behavior were assigned to males and females. Parental authority and respect for elders were traditional and vocations also were traditional and dictated by the customs of the past.

In our present-day, highly mobile society, old-world traditions have been broken, and there is less chance for continuing family solidarity. Reassurance or advice from members of the larger family group—grandparents, aunts, uncles, etc.—is reduced, as housing conditions and new social customs tend to separate the generations. Parental authority has less weight when advice and information come from so many other sources; and in a rapidly changing situation, the usefulness of past experience as a guide is greatly diminished. Children pick up all sorts of ideas, new to parents, through the media of the radio, TV and the magazines. A boy gets a job in an area of which his father knows nothing. A girl learns to run an IBM machine of which her family has never even dreamed. Often the members of a family are even somewhat separated by language differences—it is not unusual for the child patient in a hospital clinic to translate for his parent when the

doctor is trying to get an immediate history of the child's illness.

Today there are new horizons, new dangers, new aspirations. Although entire populations are now threatened with extinction in atomic war, it is still true that the burden of military service and the direct exposure to killing or being killed rest mainly on men. The whisper of death is in the father's ear, either for himself or for his sons. But women share vitally in this problem, too. Aside from the threat of war, the day by day carnage on the highways brings to everyone a constant reminder of human and mechanical fallibility. Further, people who have truly democratic and peace-loving sensibilities are continuously offended or dismayed by accounts of gross injustice and flagrant violations of basic decency, news of which is today instantly disseminated both here and abroad.

Parents who are concerned, as most parents are, that their children should be better off than they were themselves, inevitably experience the future with misgiving on other scores too. Take, for example, the problems of the schools. We have heard for years about underpaid teachers and overcrowded schools. These are the gross disorders which are written about day in and day out. But the poor education of this next generation is not yet recognized as a national calamity. For, in addition to unsatisfactory facilities, over-crowding and a shortage of teachers, no adequate consideration has been given to the development of the methods of teaching. Without education that teaches how to use scientific method in figuring things out, there may be a large group of young people who are not equipped either to cope with the constant stream of change and discovery, or to protect themselves from mass propaganda.

Mental health research

In outlining some of the sources of anxiety and uncertainty today, I wish to convey my own impression regarding the function of a constructive mental health program. I believe that the specific biological

differences between males and females and much of the divergence of emotions and behavior attendant upon these differences do *not* constitute the major problems of our present era. It is my opinion that the anxieties created by all the changes mentioned above are fundamental to the anxiousness of parents, males and females. The differences between them do not so much create tension and ill-will as serve as a focus for the worries and irritations caused by constant adaptation to change. There is an almost obsessive preoccupation with "who should do what" or "what is the right way to do things," affording rich possibilities for blame and guilt, accusation and counter-accusation.

As I suggested before, we, as experts, could readily be tempted to collaborate with this preoccupation and even to further it by dictates of one sort or another. This temptation may be offset by our unfaltering effort to promote really scientific research on our emotional and social problems. True, not all anxieties can be reduced. But the particular area of uncertainty where traditions have broken down and new situations have arisen in the intimate problems of human relationships can be more correctly appraised. With an open mind, we must seek to discover what will lead to greater satisfactions and inner security without seeking to restore the rigid preconceptions of the past.

The fatherless family

By J. Louise Despert, M.D.

The emotional climate of the family before the father's death or absence greatly affects the child's reaction to such a separation

We have often been told that child psychology begins with the end of the nineteenth century. This is correct enough. But what about the child and his emotional problems in the distant past. Have we no curiosity about his relation to other members of the family—and particularly to the father—before psychology made its official debut?

Even if the modern psychologist is curious enough to look into the historical background of the family and the father's position in it, he is likely to go no further back

than the Victorian era. But to understand changes in the role of the father, and the waning of his authoritarian powers we must go further into the past.

Let us recall briefly a few landmarks. Even in a civilization such as Greece which is known for its enlightenment and its great social, intellectual, and artistic achievements, we find the father invested with singularly primitive powers. Exposure—the inhuman destruction of the child—was the absolute and uncontested right of the father. For the Romans, also, the very word "father" signified dignity and power. The father continued to have the right to reject the child at birth, and it was he who kept the child in case of divorce. One historian, Goodsell, tells us that the father might "scourge his children, sell them into

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slavery, banish them from the country, or put them to death."

Now, when the Puritans and other settlers came to these shores, they brought with them convictions about the father's role in the family which were clearly traceable to an instrument of legal power known as the Roman Code. The Roman Code, let us not forget, had a vast and continued influence over European countries—England as well as others.

Many articles of this law do not concern us here, but one of them does very specifically. The Law of the Twelve Tables made it clear that the father had the right to sell his child, and that the child could be sold not once, but two or three times. The child was part of the patrimony or estate. With the third sale, legislators felt that the father was going just a little too far and his *patria potestas* was in danger of being withdrawn from him. More absolute power in the father is not met at any other known period of history.

This is an extreme example. But we see traces of this power way up to the end of the nineteenth century. Is not the exploitation of children in the factories of that day a glaring example of the father's power to dispose of his child as he will?

The Roman tradition in America

When the Colonists started their new life on this continent they did not leave the father's tyrannical authority behind. It was still very much with them. But it was to be fairly short-lived. Complex social and economic factors which affected the family in Colonial times cannot be examined here. But of interest to us is the fact that the emancipation of the child took place during and even antedating the industrial revolution on the old continent. At the beginning of the nineteenth century there was a sudden, momentous, almost cataclysmic upheaval. Actually, children were freeing themselves, breaking away from the authority of the father, who must have inherited a heavy load of guilt from generations of his authoritarian ancestors.

It is in the light of these facts of history that the Victorian father must be considered. He is pointed out all too often as the one who "started it all." However, he was not the innovator of tyranny in the family but, as we have seen, a rather mild figure by comparison with his forefathers. The Victorian father on this side of the Atlantic actually was seeking to regain power which had temporarily escaped from him.

Post-Victorian influences

If the weakening of the father's might during the beginning of the nineteenth century was in part the result of the child's rebellion, we find an altogether different motivation in the freeing of the child which took place *after* the Victorian age. By this time, modern psychologists had gained insight into the emotional needs of the child, and in particular his need for self-expression. Simultaneously the emancipation of women tended to reduce the power of the father. Today the father is not the formidable figure that he was, to various degrees, in the past.

These are some of the changes that have taken place in the role of the father over a long period of time. If we are to consider the situation of the *fatherless* family, we must first think what the father stands for—what he means to the mother, and the children and society in general. This meaning, of course, will differ in response to social conditions and to the inner problems or adjustments which these cause in the individual.

Through the centuries, the father's function as head of the family did not include physical or emotional closeness to the child. Though powerful, he was also remote. Today, also, the father may be remote from his children, though sometimes in another sense. In discussing the fatherless family therefore, let us consider two aspects: the situation when the father is physically absent from the family; and the problem where the father is physically present but emotionally removed or alienated.

Conference Notes

• The National Conference of Christians and Jews will cooperate in presenting more than 30 summer workshops in intergroup and human relations education throughout the United States this year. Thirty-three colleges and universities will participate in the program through the Commission on Educational Organizations and its 62 Regional Offices. Since 1941, when the first specialized workshop in intergroup education was offered, the National Conference has cooperated with more than 290 of these workshops. For further information, write Dr. Herbert L. Seamans, 43 West 57th Street, New York 19.

• The National Council on Family Relations will hold its 1957 annual conference at Purdue University, Lafayette, Indiana, August 21-24.

The father may be physically removed from the family under widely different circumstances. The most drastic, and generally thought to be most traumatic kind of separation, is permanent removal—*death*. For instance, the death of the father is ad-
duced in numerous studies as a very important cause of juvenile delinquency and also appears frequently as one element in emotional illness.

What does death mean?

What is the meaning of death to a child? Obviously it has different meanings to children at different ages. To the three- or four-year-old death does not mean physical dissolution and irretrievable loss, as adults know these things. To the child, death means absence and disappearance; conversely, absence and disappearance are equated with death.

A two-and-a-half-year-old little girl, only child of young parents who were living during the war with the paternal grandparents, saw her father leave for the army. No explanation was given her. For the following two or three weeks, without giving any key to her behavior, she restlessly opened and closed doors, peered into closets, and dark corners, and looking frustrated, often whined. The search for her father was on, yet the family was totally unaware of her motivation and impatient with her behav-

ior. This child could talk, yet she did not mention her father at any time during these activities, so that her actions were completely bewildering to the family. When the family turned to a psychiatrist for an explanation it was suggested that the little girl be told that her daddy had gone away, that sometime he would be back, and that all the time he was thinking of little Ellen and would write to her. Reassurance of love by the present members of the family was also given, in deeds as well as in words. The real nature of her father's absence became clear to the little girl in a fairly short while, and she understood that his absence did not mean that he had deserted her.

What does the father mean?

The second question is, *what does the father mean to the young child?* During the first three years or so of life, the child is very close to the mother, and the father plays a secondary role—although the demarcation between father's and mother's role in our society tends to blur. If a young child whose father dies is very close to his mother, the loss of the father is felt with less intensity, since oral satisfactions and body closeness are the center of the infant's instinctual urges. But the traumatic realization of death will come later and the sense of loss increase as the years go on.

The manner of death—whether it is sudden or follows on a protracted illness—also has significance. As far as children are concerned, the sudden death of the father from such causes as heart attack is not common. Accidental death, however, is not so rare, even among younger fathers. The essential difference for the child between sudden death and death following protracted illness is that the first comes as a shock for which neither he nor his mother is prepared. His mother cannot hide her grief, nor is it healthy that she should deny it. That his father is dead, is a direct threat to the child, and particularly the young boy, who tends to feel that if one male is destroyed, he himself, as a male, will also be destroyed.

At the time of such a loss, the child depends on his mother for emotional comfort and for the realization and acceptance of the loss. We can see that the *emotional climate* of the family prior to the father's death and the emotional maturity of the mother will have an important bearing on the child's reaction. The mother herself, badly hit by the tragedy, has to cope with her own feelings. Depression can overwhelm her, but it need not, if the satisfactions of her married life and her awareness of the role she can play in supporting her child help her accept her loss. Some of her grief she must share with the child, with awareness of the child's degree of ability to grasp the situation. The importance of the emotional climate is strikingly demonstrated in the case of a death infrequently encountered, namely, the father's suicide. Even though the family may have given the appearance of happy and integrated functioning, the suicide usually brings to a climax underlying personality conflicts which have passed unnoticed or have been just barely tolerated. Obviously in this situation, complications are added to the already serious problem of unexpected death.

Death after long illness

Death following protracted illness, while often no less traumatic an experience than sudden death, finds mother and child a little better prepared for the acceptance of finality. However, with a young child, death following sickness may make him fear that any mild sign of illness in himself is the forerunner of his own death. Therefore, it is necessary to explain that one does not necessarily die if one gets sick, but that one has to be very *very* sick, and that there must be serious complications, before one dies. This anxiety through identification is again met in the slightly older child, beginning at approximately three or four. Moreover, the child's anxiety about his own death may spread to a fear for the remaining parent. If Daddy died, he reasons, Mommy could too. Reassurance on an intellectual and rational basis does not go

very deep. But if the child previously has been happily adjusted and if his relation has been good with his parents—in particular with the remaining parent, the mother—the anxiety will not be so severe. Here again the *emotional climate* of the family prior to the father's death is of prime importance.

A more complex situation

The problem of the loss of the father becomes more complex as the child grows in age, reaching a peak toward the end of the oedipal situation. If the father dies before the resolutions of the oedipal conflict, the unconscious hostility of the boy toward his father may stir up in him intense guilt feelings, and he may fear that his death wish toward the father was actually what caused the father's death. Feeling responsible, the child brushes aside realistic explanations and admits only his own hostility and guilt. Rather severe emotional conflicts may arise out of this particular situation if the child's attachment to his mother has been excessive and the hostility to the father, either overt or unconscious, has been intense. His mother's redoubled affection may only be felt as additional cause for guilt. Many a child in such a situation will require professional help.

The girl who is in the midst of an unresolved oedipal conflict at the time her father dies has somewhat different problems. The loss of her father will be more devastating if she has been excessively attached to him, and guilt feelings toward her mother will also be intensified.

Reaction of the adolescent

With children in the older age group, preadolescent and adolescent years, the situation is somewhat easier for the mother to handle. Again, however, the emotional adjustment of the adolescent to his or her father will be a determining factor in the resolution of the youngster's grief.

The adolescent has made a good or poor identification with his father by then. Through the years many associations have

grown which are constructive, or the opposite. It is likely that at this time the adolescent may be more comfort to his mother than she to him. In fact, there is even a danger that he may substitute for his father to an extent that may hamper his own psycho-sexual development. The mother at this stage must be able to refrain from putting excessive demands upon him. The boy who tends immediately to step into his father's position is one who has not resolved his earlier conflicts, and his mother can help him best by understanding that depending on him too much can only further his attachment to her, with grave dangers of maladjustment.

A further issue can be anticipated at this point which is not secondary in importance, though it is in sequence—the possibility and desirability of the mother's marrying again. The young child may almost immediately begin to say, "I want my Daddy. I want to have a Daddy." Yet preparing for a father substitute has problems of its own. It takes time and an awareness that the needs of the child cannot be expected always to coincide exactly with those of his mother.

The common denominator

Even as we have come to understand that the effect of death cannot be considered apart from the emotional set-up in which it takes place, we will realize that this climate is the element common to all situations involving loss, whether final or temporary, short or long, complete or partial.

"*Partir c'est mourir un peu*," says the poet: to depart is to die a little. And, this is true also for him who remains. Indeed, the separations I will now speak about include some of the elements of the total loss of death.

In writing my book, *Children of Divorce*, I examined the repercussions of the breaking up of the family primarily from the point of view of the child. Since the majority of children are left with their mothers at such a time, it is clear that the maximum

trauma for most children is related to the absence of the father. This may be caused by his desertion, by separation, spontaneous or legal, or by legal divorce. Examination of a large number of cases resulted in one inescapable conclusion: that legal divorce has always been preceded by a period of emotional disruption which I call *emotional divorce*. Too often, children's emotional disturbances are viewed in the light of the break alone and not in the light of the upsetting influences which have preceded the final crisis.

The need for insight

The mother may feel helpless when it comes to explaining death to a child since death does not always strike in logical patterns. In the divorce situation, on the other hand, while the mother may have intellectual understanding of the child's questions, she may—and often does—lack emotional insight. The hostilities and frustrations deriving from her disappointment in marriage are likely to hamper her ability to help the child in a very painful situation.

It is of foremost importance that the child be given the reassurance that although his parents have ceased to love each other, each continues to love him; provided, of course, that one of them has not openly through word and action exposed lack of love, or even hatred, for the child—such instances are not so rare as one might think.

If the father has proved inadequate or, as described by the law, "unfit," the child must be given a simple concept of emotional illness to explain behavior which he would otherwise attribute as rejection of himself for his own "badness." Strong guilt feelings arising in such a case can throw the child off balance. The father's desertion, for instance, can be interpreted by a child as his own responsibility, if prior to the desertion he has felt that his father disapproved of him.

Let us remember that, present or absent, the father stands as an image of manhood for his child. The tendency of one parent

to point to the other as the culprit may relieve some of the tension for the adult, but is very destructive for the child. Enough has been said to emphasize the significance of the emotional situation prior to separation, divorce, or desertion. The child may not be able to grasp all the complexities of the true picture and in fact they will confuse him and increase his anxiety. But a mother who, despite growing discord with her husband, has stayed close to her child will discern his level of comprehension and key her explanations to his capacity. She should be sensitive to his emotional capacities also. There is danger in excessive closeness at such moments, similar to that we have already pointed out in connection with the death situation.

Temporary separations

Not so dramatic are the temporary separations from the father which occur in cycles, as in the case of the "weekend father," or the traveling salesman. This situation is of course quite different—there is even a certain kind of security which comes from the father's cyclic return. But problems of a different nature may arise. The suburban father who is on the move to and from his home for some hours daily not only has little enough time, apart from weekends, to spend with his family; he also is apt to find himself exhausted at the end of the day, just when he should be able to enjoy his family.

Much advice has been given to the suburban father about the need for a moment of relaxation to allow him to shed some of his understandable irritability. The problem is not as simple as this, however. Suburban living tends more and more to make the mother the dominant parent. She has to step repeatedly into the father's role, especially with regard to discipline, since the father has so little chance to be with the children. Yet the father's authority, which he has so little chance to exert, should not be further weakened either by the mother's completely taking over, or by threats of weekend or end-of-day paternal punish-

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ments. Two very different attitudes are represented by "Your father wouldn't want you to do this" and "Wait till your father comes home!" The first nurtures the image of a father who remains very much present. The second only carries a threat of a formidable father—a threat, whether carried out or not.

Emotional absence

The father who is physically present but emotionally removed needs to be mentioned because we generally think of an absentee father as one who is just not there in the flesh. The father who is emotionally displaced as a male figure within his family is seen with increasing frequency today and is the product of many complex factors. The passive father married to a masculine, aggressive mother is well known to the child psychiatrist, for the children of such marriages represent a large part of child psychiatry practice, and actually it is not stretching the meaning of the phrase to see them as members of "The Fatherless Family." However, this is too vast a subject to be presented as an appendage to the more orthodox interpretation.

Regard for the child's capacity

In resumé, let me emphasize that I have no magic formula for handling specific and separate situations, but that a few general principles must be kept in mind when dealing with the varied traumatic experiences attached to these situations. The age at which the separation takes place has a bearing on the kind of support which is to be given to the child. Attempts to explain conflicts must be made in terms that the child can grasp. If the mother is grieved beyond her endurance, help must be sought—minimal help being in the nature of an outlet for tensions and resentments. In communicating with the child and attempting to impart some of the realities which he will have to accept, one must stay as close to the truth as the maturation level of the child permits.

It must never be forgotten that a child,

however young, will always get the emotional overtones and that no feelings are hidden from his antennae. The initial stage of separation is the most traumatic, while the continuance of separation has long-term effects on the development of the child's personality. Relatively speaking, alternating separations are more easily tolerated. The most important single factor is the emotional climate of the family and the emotional maturity of the mother at the time the separation, of whatever type, takes place. Indeed, this is the common denominator of the diverse phenomena of "The Fatherless Family."

Pamphlet notes

• *About 100 Books . . . A Gateway to Better Intergroup Understanding* by Ann G. Wolfe. A helpful new guide for parents, librarians and all who work with children. Carefully annotated and graded, this attractive pamphlet describes about 100 books which will help children and young people in understanding the differences—and important similarities—among racial, religious and ethnic groups. *Write:* Division of Youth Services, American Jewish Committee, 386 Fourth Avenue, New York 16, N. Y. 20 cents. Other excellent lists built around these goals are *Books are Bridges*, published by the American Friends Service Committee and the Anti Defamation League of B'nai Brith (25 cents), and *Books for Brotherhood*, compiled by the National Conference of Christians and Jews, 43 W. 57th St., New York.

• *Four Decades of Action for Children*, by Dorothy E. Bradbury, and *Your Children's Bureau*. Two companion pamphlets—the first, a short history of the U.S. Children's Bureau; the second, the story of the Bureau's current program. *Write:* Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington 25, D. C. 35 cents and 20 cents.

• *The Children We Teach* by Nina Ridenour, Ph.D., a new pamphlet to help parents and teachers understand the personality development of children, is now available from the Mental Health Materials Center, 1790 Broadway, New York 19, N. Y. (Single copies, 40 cents.) In such chapters as "The Troubled Reader," "The Shy One" and "The Everyday Child," Dr. Ridenour offers skillful advice on the many personalities that make up a classroom group.

Is there an "ideal" father?

By Ray Lee Birdwhistell

Except for comic strip stereotypes, there is little today that tells a man how he is supposed to act and feel in family relationships

Dr. Birdwhistell, author of *Introduction to Kinesics*, rounds out the picture of today's father with his findings from anthropology—and from the young men in his classes at the University of Buffalo.

There is something a little appalling about addressing oneself to a topic whose title is covered by a question. Such a title implies that a clear answer to the question will be forthcoming, and if this is not the case, the temptation is to refer it to future research, and then talk about another topic closer to one's heart and ken.

Facing this predicament squarely, I will say that, unfortunately, there is no Ideal American Father. For one thing, many American males lack models against which to measure their family performances. And while we can all agree about the dangers of stereotypes, the battle lines are not clearly drawn about the social danger which exists when models for self-appraisal are absent.

There is no lack of male models for other roles: the boy scout, the future farmer, the popular young leader, the all-American boy, the athlete, the gang leader, the young scientist, the war hero, the American business man, the community leader, the lay religious leader—these are but a few of the ideals presented to young Americans. But

all these have one thing in common: they make allowance for the home only as a place occupied by spectators of the role-actor—whether parents and siblings, or wife and children, who are made proud or ashamed, are supported or deprived, by the performances of these ideal males.

Further, except for the American business man, the religious leader and the community leader, who are provided with shadowy helpmates, these ideals exclude any interdependent association with females except when the latter act as cheerleaders or admirers. A "man's man" is looked up to; a "ladies' man" is suspect. Since fathering demands a reciprocal association with women and children, it is thereby excluded as proper material for the model builders. A hundred years of genderism have developed a picture which shows a woman as the admiring female and enthusiastic spectator, who at marriage becomes "the emasculator," the "destroyer" or, at best, "the rescuer," "the advisor" and the "socializer."

If one turns to the folk myth page in the

papers—the comic page—one finds in Dagwood, Pappy Yocum, Mr. Berry, a dramatic representation of the cost of fathering. This becomes particularly clear if the *whole* comic page is read and seen as a single myth. Strong, free and attractive, Steve Canyon, Mark Trail, and Rex Morgan provide the “Before” images; abject or ridiculous, the husband-and-father figures represent the “After.”

Television, radio and the popular story magazine keep before us these images attesting to the bad effects of constant association with women, particularly in the arena of parenthood. And always the unmarried hero is paired with the comic father in a “downfall of man” motif.

My own special interest as a researcher is in *kinesics*, body motions which are socially patterned and thus have a communicational aspect. In studying this material, I have been interested in how the child learns the posture, stance and vocabulary of his current role and of the successive ones he assumes on the way to adulthood. Males are carefully directed how *not* to be like girls, while girls are instructed to be ladylike and feminine. Boys will at times be praised for being “manly” and girls, particularly in the immediately pre-puberty stage, will be counseled against being “tomboys.” On the other hand, while I have seen many little girls explicitly instructed in motherly behavior and rewarded for being “little mothers,” I have never seen a male either instructed or rewarded or punished for behavior modeled on a future father role. American male children are not praised as “good little fathers.”

Now it is probably true that the model-makers, the myth-makers in American mass communications, represent a special subculture—that there is a process of selection in the Madison Avenue, Rockefeller Center, Hollywood, and Tribune Tower worlds which contributes to the exceedingly hostile “humorous” model of the downtrodden American male. Painfully conscious of the oversimplifications of pseudo-psychiatry, often without being aware that they are

either pseudo or oversimplified, these mass communicators have taken a position which boils down to “put the blame on Mom.”

Implicit within this model of the emasculating or rescuing woman, or “Mom,” is the picture of the defenseless male who is justified in his defection either because of his helplessness or, as one author has implied, because he is not of the naturally superior sex.* Such stereotypes as these, while overpraising or damning the female, present a patronizing picture of the American male. Now whether these profiles are derived from common experience with an immigrant father who had to learn how to be a parent in a new culture, or are simply the fantasies of a maturity-denying culture, is inconsequential to our present analysis. Our concern is with the myth and not with the myth-maker.

The double life of modern woman

Dr. Margaret Mead has directed our attention to two rising currents in the American scene. One of these is concerned with the fact that American women, increasingly employed outside the home, are being asked to perform two roles—that of joint bread-winner and of maintainer of the home. Even if she has no paid employment outside the home, the woman is asked to play an increasing role in community life, though she may also have the responsibility for young children. In this she differs from her grandmother and, to a great extent, from her mother, who were expected to play community roles only after the children were pretty well able to take care of themselves.

Particularly among the young fathers, there has been an adaptation to this bifurcation of the female role. Whether most men are doing more in the home than they did formerly would be difficult to determine, but it is evident that, particularly in relationship to the babies, the father is doing *different* things than his father's father's father did. In many American families he

*For a discussion of this point of view, see Dr. Klineberg's paper, p. 12.

is performing roles which formerly would have been handled by his wife, maids, nurses, cleaning women or dependent relatives.

The man's reaction to home tasks

I have only two parenthetical comments to make on this which come from my experience with adult education classes in "Culture and Personality." One of these is that, when the father does these tasks, he feels he is doing his wife a special favor. While these are duties which the busy wife commonly performs in the home, and for which she gets no particular credit, the young husband feels specially virtuous when he does them. On the other hand, he also feels that he *should* help his wife, who is quite obviously overworked. In one of my lectures to an adult class I remarked on the unfairness of this, suggesting that the male was not providing his wife with task satisfaction, while claiming it for himself with respect to the very same jobs.

One of my adult male students answered that not only did his wife expect him to manage to provide the family with a fully decorated ranch house shortly after marriage, but expected him to get rapidly promoted in his firm and do a good deal of the child care. He further complained that he had developed considerable resistance to volunteering for any task in the family because, once he had done it, that task became one of his regular chores. He ended by saying, to the nodded agreement of his fellow males in the class, "The worst part of it is that I always feel guilty . . . I can never do enough. For the past three years I have never relaxed completely while golfing or bowling because I think of all the things I should be doing at home."

This man's wife did not work professionally, but another student, whose wife did, said: "I thought this only happened when your wife worked . . . at my house when my wife and I aren't quarreling over unfinished work, we are in a kind of 'after you, Alphonse' business where I am saying, you rest and I'll do it and she is answering, 'no,



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Childrens Press

Jackson & Racine, Chicago 7, Ill.

you rest and I'll do it.' The truth is, neither of us wants to do it, and the one who gives in and rests feels so guilty he can't. I can't even do my office work at home without apologizing or feeling guilty."

This seems to bear out Dr. Mead's second point which stresses the extent to which the male is being seduced from his other roles into the home, in a career-defeating manner. It seems evident from all of this that in a society which is in rapid transition—in which there is a very real shift in the definition of male and female roles—the absence of models for self-measurement is exceedingly expensive. Not only do these young males not know what to *be* like, what to *do* and what *not to do*, but also they are not even sure about how they should *feel*.

Nor are we dealing simply with the present ambiguities in the father role. Roles are reciprocals of other roles, and the female faced by an uncertain male is placed in a like predicament. For while idealized mother roles are, to be sure, presented to the maturing females, these have lost some of their meaning. The woman's sense of the value of her contribution is not enhanced by her husband's doubts about his.

The family as primary unit

This picture threatens to become so dismal as to becloud the larger issues, of which these are but symptomatic. One of these issues is the place of the family itself in the society of the Western world, and particularly in the United States. I know of no period in man's history—at least not since the days of the family hunting-and-gathering group of subsistence level tribes—when the immediate family has had such a concentration upon it as *the primary unit of society*.

Two cultural "inventions" are central to this concentration. The first of these is the fact that no other group that I know about ever assumed that two adults, from the day of their marriage, should get all of their primary emotional satisfactions from each other and, later, from their children. The

home *inside the house* may seem to contradict what we have said of the woman as an active member of the larger community. But all too often the woman is told to work in the community as a kind of palliative or psychotherapeutic experience so that she can carry on more effectively in the house. This is the mid-twentieth-century puritanism, which bids her recreate so that she can get ready to go home to work.

Parents' new responsibilities

The other "invention," closely related to this one, is even more revolutionary. This is the prevalent opinion that parents should be responsible not only for the physical and economic welfare of their children and the social acceptability of their behavior, but also for their emotional health and development. Today, undigested awareness of the dynamics of personality formation makes parents constantly fearful that they may bring their children up to be monsters.

Meanwhile, some of the traditional sources of help and advice have dwindled. In the past two generations we have seen an increasingly segmented American family. In-laws, grandparents, uncles and aunts have lost status as important influences on the child. It is true that the school seems to play a new role, what with counseling, clinical psychology and the like. But the very vehemence of the attack on the educational system indicates that a strong overtone of guilt and confusion is projected in these charges. It is not surprising that evidence is accumulating which points to confusion concerning the role of the family as a source of mental illness in America.

However, let us try to see this situation in perspective. The seemingly spiteful and mischievous myths which I touched on earlier may seem far more benevolent and constructive if we recognize the function of mythology in a culture. Mythology, whether expressed in a passion play, formalized folk-tale, joke or comic strip, is not to be taken as literal description. It is always some kind of metaphor. Often the events portrayed by myths have the same order

of reality as do private fantasies—they serve as commentaries on certain implications of reality.

Though they are not untruths, myths as myths or ideals as ideals still do not represent the conventional occurrences in a society. Myths serve, rather, either as goals or warnings. In this sense, the myth picture of the father warns the male from over-involvement in the family at the expense of the society. The myth-maker, whether he regards himself as "just a cartoonist" or as artist or social critic, illuminates certain aspects of the maze through which a member of society must pass in his life course.

The negative ideal

American society is in transition. Ghost images of the way father used to be (or rather, used to be pictured) have not yet disappeared. The father of the future, which is another way of talking about the way we think he ought to be now, has not yet emerged in clear focus. The negative ideal, or warning image, occupies our consciousness; the positive image is not yet clearly present.

I began this article by saying that, "*unfortunately*, no Ideal Father exists." Allow me now to restate this. A great many young couples today have marriages startling in their difference from both their parents' marriages and from that suggested by a Dagwood and Blondie comedy. Undramatic in their adaptation, they remain unreported in psychiatric, family service or divorce statistics. Working seriously at their marriages and gaining satisfaction out of parenthood, they do not treat family discord as catastrophic, nor are they under-aware of its seriousness. These are not heroic figures who will provide ideal images for the insecure to copy. Their particular adjustments fit their particular circumstances. In a society as complex as ours, no single sharply delineated image will suffice; no single stereotyped situation exists.

If this is so, you may well ask why I lament the fact that there is no standard ideal for today's father. This does seem

contradictory and I am not at all certain that I resolve my dilemma by saying that I hope a new variety of myth-making will arise. Yet I do hope that, in the light of new knowledge gained from psychology and psychiatry, from sociology and anthropology, new ideals for self-measurement will grow, and that we can learn to state them in new and dynamic ways.

Mutually supporting roles

As we look at these undramatic and successful young families, it is evident that they are re-sorting the responsibilities of mother and father and restating the mutual responsibilities of parents and children. Exactly how they are doing it is not yet clear. But one thing is evident; they are not becoming so mock-democratic and "modern" that the distinctions between the sexes and generations are blurred in a mono-sexual, orphaned, "buddy" family. Inter-related with the larger community, they are not escaping to, or from it. Accepting the new resources for help with child care, they are working out a pattern in which parenthood and citizenship are mutually supporting roles. It is my faith that the new "father" or new "mother" will be seen in relation to this pattern of shared responsibility and interdependence, not as isolated and unachievable ideal roles.

Congratulations to new head of Children's Bureau

As we go to press, announcement is made that Katherine Brownell Oettinger has been sworn in as Chief of the Children's Bureau, Department of Health, Education and Welfare. All those interested in the welfare of children will join the Child Study Association in offering congratulations to Mrs. Oettinger. She brings to the position the wide experience gained as Dean of the School of Social Work, Boston University, as Chief, Division of Community Service, Bureau of Mental Health, Pennsylvania Department of Welfare, and as a psychiatric social worker—fine qualifications for a most important job. We extend to her our best wishes.



Summer fun in new books for children



Animals and reptiles

The Rabbit Story. By Alvin Tresselt. Illus. by Leonard Weisgard. Lothrop. \$2.50. You can almost feel the fur on this little wild rabbit as you follow his life cycle in this first book of a new Nature series. (5-8)

Cottontail Rabbit. By Elizabeth and Charles Schwartz. Illus. by Charles Schwartz. Holiday. \$2. Simple, appealing story of the life and ways of the cottontail. (7-9)

Mice at Home and Afield. Written and illus. by Olive L. Earl. Morrow. \$2.25. Easy-to-read story, with delightful pictures, of all kinds of mice, their habits and characteristics. (5-8)

The Little Ones. Written and illus. by Inez Hogan. Dutton. \$2.25. Friendly forest story about small animals with their own systems for handling danger and accepting friendliness. (5-7)

Strange Babies. By Margery S. Stewart and Eunice V. Buck. Illus. by Helen Hughes Wilson. Caxton. \$3. Animal babies that appeal especially to children are gaily personified in imaginative short stories. (7-10)

Animals in Fur. By Clarence J. Hylander. Photographs. Macmillan. \$3.50. An outstanding book for the amateur naturalist about mammals to be observed in the United States. (10 and up)

Frogs and Polliwogs. By Dorothy Childs Hogner. Illus. by Nils Hogner. Crowell. \$2.50. The varieties and habits of these creatures, perennially fascinating to children; informative and well-illustrated. (8-11)

True Book of Reptiles. By Lois Ballard. Illus. by Irma Wilde. Childrens Press. \$2. An ever engrossing subject in a well-illustrated book for beginning readers. (6-8)

All About Snakes. By Bessie M. Hecht. Illus. by Rudolph Freund. Random. \$1.95. Informative and vivid presentation to interest both enthusiast and casual reader. (9-12)

Desert Drama. By Iona Hiser. Abelard-Schuman. \$3. Clear photographs, drawings and descriptions of the reptiles, birds, animals and weather phenomena found in our Southwest. A family reference book. (12 and up)

Birds and insects

Penguins. Written and illus. by Louis Darling. Morrow. \$2. This curious bird made even more appealing in a book about his odd life and amusing habits. (8-11)

Winter Tree Birds. Written and illus. by Lucy Ozone and John Hawkinson. Whitman. \$2. For young watchers, simple facts about six birds, attractively presented. (5-7)

Run Sandpiper Run. Written and illus. by Lloyd Lózes Goff. Lothrop. \$2.50. A gentle telling of the life story of this beach bird. (7-9)

The Book of Songbirds. By Leon Hausman. Illus. by Ned Smith. Grosset & Dunlap. \$1.95. A record and many lively drawings offer combined ear-and-eye appeal to young bird enthusiasts. (7-11)

Spinning Wings. By Lucy Gallup. Illus. by Dmitri Alexandroff. Morrow. \$2.50. Dramatic story of a tern family during nesting time, and how an injury to the male is overcome before the migration season. Beautiful illustrations. (9-12)

Pedro the Road Runner. By George Cory Franklin. Illus. by William Moyers. Hastings. \$2. The ways of a road runner and other wild life in a fine narrative of our Far West. (8-12)

A Home for Woody. By Ivah Green. Abelard-

Schuman. \$2.50. Sensitive, conservation-slanted story of the life cycle of the beautiful wood duck. Good photographs. (10-14)

Dipper of Copper Creek. By John and Jean George. Illus. by Jean George. Dutton. \$3.50. A fine boy grows into manhood during a summer of dramatic closeness to nature's wonders and the creatures of the Canadian Rockies. (11-14)

Green Darner: The Story of a Dragonfly. Written and illus. by Robert M. McClung. Morrow. \$2. The life cycle of this fascinating insect told in simple story form with superb drawings. (7-10)

The Makers of Honey. By Mary G. Phillips. Crowell. \$2.50. A lively telling of the honey bee's useful and interesting life. (10 and up)

Crickets. By Olive L. Earle. Morrow. \$2. An easy-to-read book by an expert in this kind of writing. (7-10)

Firefly. By Paul McCutcheon Sears. Illus. by Glen Rounds. Holiday. \$2. Well-illustrated. Exciting study of a little known, though much observed, insect. (9-12)

All About Moths and Butterflies. By Robert S. Lemmon. Illus. by Fritz Kredel. Random. \$1.95. The magic world of moths and butterflies unfolds attractively in this lively account. (9-12)

Insect Engineers: The Story of Ants. Written and illus. by Ruth Bartlett. Morrow. \$2.75. Imaginative, well-diagramed introduction to the curious world of ants. Will stimulate young observers to further study. (9 and up)

The Wonder World of Insects. Written and illus. by Marie Neurath. Lothrop. \$1.75. Effective drawings and brief text tell fascinating facts about insects. (7-9)

Insects and Their World. By Carroll Lane Fenton and Dorothy Constance Pallas. John Day. \$2.95. Fascinating facts of the insect world, simply written. Fine black and white drawings. (9-12)

Insects on Parade. By Clarence J. Hylander. Macmillan. \$3.75. A comprehensive, engagingly written account of insects found in the United States. (12 and up)

Trees, rivers, natural wonders

See Through the Forest.

See Through the Jungle.

By Millicent Selsam. Illus. by Winifred Hubell. Harper. \$2.50 each. Exciting tours through forest and jungle from the underground to the tops of the trees. The interdependence of animals living on different levels is interestingly described. (8-11)

America's Natural Wonders. By C. B. Colby. Coward-McCann. \$2. Photographs enhance a brief travel-beckoning book on our forests, caverns and geological formations. (9-12)

The River's Journey. Written and illus. by Anne Marie Jauss. Lippincott. \$2.25. A river is followed from its mountain origin to the ocean. Unusual drawings. (9-11)

The Hole in the Tree. Written and illus. by Jean George. Dutton. \$2.50. Two children watch a hole grow in a tree trunk as a succession of creatures nest in it. (7-10)

Our American Trees. By Ruth H. Dudley. Illus. by Nils Hogner. Crowell. \$2.50. Nuggets of fascinating information and beautiful drawings to spark enthusiasm for further study, and for tree conservation. (9-12)

The sea and its treasures

Sea Treasure: A Guide to Shell Collecting. By Kathleen Verger Johnstone. Illus. by Rudolph Freund and René Martin. Houghton Mifflin. \$4. A colorfully illustrated handbook for beginning collectors that makes intriguing reading. (12 and up)

Fishes. By Herbert S. Zim and Hurst H. Shoemaker. Illus. by James Gordon Irving. Simon & Schuster. \$1. Any fisherman or tropical fish enthusiast will enjoy this inexpensive guide to identification. (8 and up)

Let's Take a Trip to a Fishery. By Sarah R. Reidman. Abelard-Schuman. \$2.75. All about this vital industry, from old to modern times. Illus. with drawings and photographs. (10 and up)

Picture Book of the Sea. By Jerome S. Meyer. Illus. by Richard Floethe. Lothrop. \$2.50. An introduction to the scientific aspects of the sea, with a good measure of humor and entertainment. (7-9)

Wonders of the Aquarium. By Sigmund A. Lavine. Illus. by Ernest H. Hart. Dodd, Mead and Co. \$2.50. Simple guide for new aquarium enthusiasts, including historical and geographical origins and information on both plants and fish. (11-14)

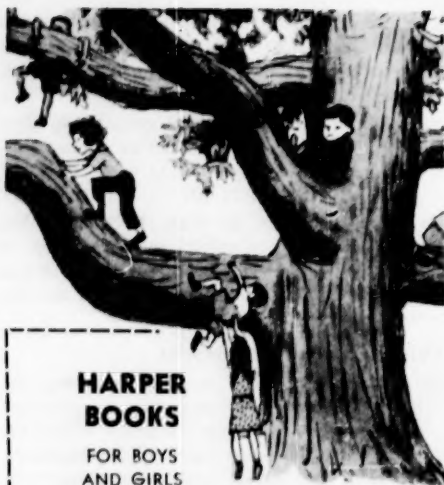
Leaper. Written and illus. by Robert M. McClung. Morrow. \$2.25. The life cycle of the salmon in a dramatic presentation. (10-12)

Natural sciences

Growing and Changing. By Samuel Exler. Illus. by Florence Exler. Lothrop. \$2.50. The difficult concept of nature's perpetual state of change, simply illustrated in this science primer. (5-8)

The Four Seasons. By William P. Gottlieb. Simon & Schuster. \$1. A big book of the seasons, with many photographs. Easy-to-read and pleasantly paced. (6-8)

Let's Find Out About Weather. By Herman and Nina Schneider. Illus. by Alois Fabry Jr. Grosset & Dunlap. \$2.95. Exciting book of fact, with charts and materials for making weather-reading instruments. (10-12)



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Weather. By Paul E. Lehr, R. Will Bennett, and Herbert S. Zim. Illus. by Harry McNaught. Simon & Schuster \$1. Crammed with facts, figures and charts, this is a treat for the weather-minded. (12 and up)

Comets. By Herbert S. Zim. Illus. by Gustav Schrotter. Morrow. \$2.25. Fascinating story of our solar system and man's ever increasing knowledge about it. (9-12)

The Earth Our Home. By Patrick Moore. Illus. by Patricia Cullen. Abelard-Schuman. \$2.50. Illuminating scientific history of the earth, how it developed and became inhabited. (13 and up)

Experiments With a Microscope. By Nelson F. Beeler and Franklyn N. Branley. Illus. by Anne Marie Jauss. Crowell. \$2.75. Clear illustrations and readable text enhance a stimulating book, full of suggestions for observing and doing. (11 and up)

Rocks and minerals

For Pebble Pups: A Collecting Guide for Junior Geologists. By Dolla Cox Weaver. Chicago Natural History Museum. \$1.25. Guide for young enthusiasts, complete with good bibliography and a useful sample box of specimens. (9-12)

Rocks and Minerals and the Story They Tell. By Robert Irving. Illus. by Ida Scheib and photographs. Knopf. \$2.75. Basic geology with instructions for beginning a collection. (9-13)

The Story of Rocks. By Dorothy Shuttlesworth. Illus. by Su Zan N. Swain. Garden City. \$2.50. Colored illustrations accompanying brief descriptions make for easy identifications. Good bibliography. (10-14)

How to Know the Minerals and Rocks. By Richard M. Pearl. Drawings and photographs. Signet Key Books. \$.50. A complete reference book for the avid collector able to handle the many facts concisely presented. (12 and up)

Mining Around the World. By June Metcalfe. Illus. by Garry MacKenzie. Oxford. \$2.50. Uranium, tin, lead, silver, zinc, gold and diamonds are discovered and mined in this fascinating account. (12 and up)

Activities

All Ready for Summer. By Leone Adelson. Illus. by Kathleen Elgin. McKay. \$2.75. The feel and smell of spring and summer are in this zestful picture book. (3-6)

Nature Games and Activities. By Sylvia Cassell. Illus. by Peter Burchard. Harper. \$2.50. Simply written with good illustrations, this book will stimulate group interest in nature. (7-9)

101 Best Card Games. By Alfred Sheinwald. Illus. by Doug Anderson. Sterling. \$2. Good rainy-day diversion presented in lively style for the young player. (9-11)

Fun-Time Window Garden. Written and illus. by Emogene Cooke. Children Press. \$2.50. Clear, concise directions and illustrations for growing plants in water and in soil. (8-11)

The Indians Knew. By Tillie S. Pine. Illus. by Ezra Jack Keats. Whittlesey. \$2. Fascinating scientific facts that were known and used by the American Indians suggest experimentation. (7-9)

Indian Games and Crafts. By Robert Hofsinde. Morrow. \$2.50. How to make simple equipment for these ancient games. (9-11)

Inside Baseball for Little Leaguers. By Mickey McConnell. Illus. by Alan Weaver. Wonder Books. Revised. \$.25. Good baseball tips drawn from analysis of the styles of many top players. Excellent diagrams and explanations of baseball's special language. (9-12)

Let's Explore Beneath the Sea. By William Knowlton. Illus. by Isami Kashiwagi. Knopf. \$3. A "skin diving" primer with good information on equipment, safety measures, and the reasons for the popularity of this sport. (11 and up)

The Boy's Book of Tools. By Raymond F. Yates. Harper. \$2.50. Sound advice about the buying and use of tools, in a most readable presentation, with helpful photographs and diagrams. (10 and up)

RUTH GREENMAN

MIMI SHORE

for the Children's Book Committee

CSAA book award

Meindert DeJong's story of a boy in wartime China, *The House of Sixty Fathers* (Harper & Brothers), received the 14th annual Children's Book Award at the Child Study Association's Annual Conference Luncheon in April. Established in 1943, the award is given by the Children's Book Committee each year for a "book for young people that faces with honesty and courage real problems in today's world."

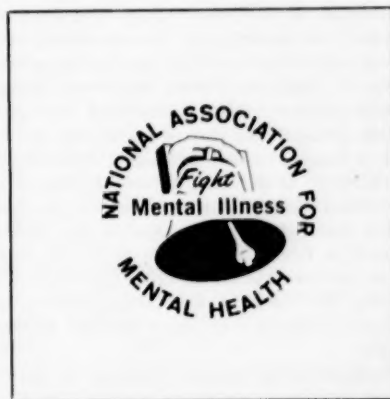
Mrs. F. S. Straus, chairman of the Committee, paid special tribute to the author in presenting the 1957 award:

"In this powerful book, Mr. DeJong strikes a note of universal concern. Through the story of a young boy in China, separated from his family in the terror and confusion of the Japanese invasion, he manages to show not only the dislocation born of war, but the triumph of family love.

With infinite understanding and compassion he traces a small boy's fear and courage, and his need always to pursue his goal of finding his family. The reader's immense relief when he finally does so is tribute to the author's achievement of reality and to his depth of sympathy."

The Committee also awarded a special citation to William O. Steele for his book, *The Lone Hunt* (Harcourt, Brace & Co.) Mrs. Straus noted that while the action of the story is laid in the past, "the basic theme—a boy's struggle to grow into manhood—is still the problem faced by boys today."

In honoring these books, Mrs. Straus added that the Committee did not intend to suggest that children should be given only books that deal with "problems." "Books of fantasy and fun have a sure place in children's reading today as always. Our award is primarily intended to focus the attention of writers and publishers of children's books on young people's need for stories which deal honestly and courageously with some of the realities in their lives."



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CSAA reports—

Leadership training

Twenty experienced hospital and public health nurses from New York and New Jersey are currently enrolled in CSAA's third leadership training project in the public health field. The program is being conducted jointly for two state health departments—New York and New Jersey—with co-sponsorship of the U.S. Children's Bureau.

The nurses, who represent hospitals, visiting nurse associations and nursing services in the two states, are already conducting discussion groups for parents and expectant parents in their own settings. Six are staff members of New York hospital; the remaining fourteen come from Teaneck, Paterson, Camden, Brooklyn, Eastern Union and West Essex Counties, Montclair, Westfield, Plainfield, New Brunswick and Trenton.

In October, the department will launch a three-year pilot project for training religious educators in leadership of parent discussion groups. Sponsored by the Protestant Council of the City of New York, and made possible by a Grant Foundation gift to the Protestant Council, the program will provide training for 15 workers each year.

Parent group education

Members of the Parent Group Education Department are participating in an increasing number of professional meetings, interpreting to other groups the implications of the Association's demonstration programs. *Aline B. Auerbach*, Director of the department, took part in a workshop on "The Role of Parents' Groups for Parents of Chronically Ill Children" at the 34th Annual Meeting of the American Orthopsychiatric Association. She spoke at the Parent Education session of the Tri-State Council on Family Relations in May, and chaired a meeting on "Mental Health Films: Are They Meeting the Needs of the Community?" at the National Conference on Social Welfare in Philadelphia.

Gertrude Goller, Associate Director of the department, participated in a panel discussion, "Is Adult Education Doing Enough with Panel Groups?" at the annual conference of the New York Association of Public School Administrators. In another panel, at the National Conference on Social Welfare, she discussed "How to Bring to Families Sound Principles of Family Living Through Meetings and Groups."

The growing emphasis on preventive mental health has brought groups in this field into increas-

ingly close alliance with parent education. One outcome of this trend was CSAA's 12-session Workshop in Parent Education, conducted early this spring at the request of the Syosset (Long Island, New York) Committee for Mental Health. Participants—all of whom had educational and/or related experience in child development—expect to use this training in work with parent groups.

Staff activities

Anna W. M. Wolf, CSAA Program Consultant, spoke on "The Emotional Needs of Young Children" in a panel discussion sponsored by the New York State Charities Aid Association on May 28.

Josette Frank describes the problems and pleasures of developing a new children's booklist in the April 1957 issue of *Americas*, published by the Pan American Union in Spanish, Portuguese and English. Her story of the preparation of "Latin America in Books for Boys and Girls," a unique listing of more than 300 books about the Latin American countries, provides a lively glimpse into the inner workings of CSAA's Children's Book Committee.

In her role as CSAA's Staff Associate for Children's Books and Mass Media, Miss Frank recently addressed a workshop at the 1957 Conference of the International Reading Association on "What Parents Are Saying About the Book Choices of Children." She also was a luncheon speaker for the Child Study Association of Baltimore at their Conference last month.

Margaret C. Dawson, Editor of *CHILD STUDY*, has been appointed Chairman of the National Advisory Committee on the Comics Project of the National Social Welfare Assembly. This project, begun in 1949, is a joint venture in producing educational comics pages with the National Comics Publications, Inc. The purpose is to bring constructive social messages to children and young people, and the company estimates that these pages have an average readership of 20,000,000 monthly. Mrs. Dawson has been a member of the Committee since its inception and has served as a consultant in preparation of many of the pages.

Consultant on awards

Sixty-two national organizations cooperated with the Thomas Alva Edison Foundation this year in selecting for awards films, television and radio programs, books and comic books which best 1) stimulate young people's interest in science and engineering 2) contribute to character development, and 3) make American traditions mean-

ingful. Through these annual awards the Foundation underscores the potential value of all the media of communication in serving the emotional and educational needs of children and young people. CSAA is one of the organizations serving as consultants for these awards.

Books selected for awards were *Exploring the*

Universe by Roy A. Gallant and Lowell Hess, *Mr. Justice Holmes* by Clara Ingram Judson and *The Old Colony of New Plymouth* by Samuel A. Morison. Comic book awards were given to *The Story of America*, published by the Gilbertson Company, and *Man in Space*, published by the Dell Publishing Company.

New books about parenthood and family life

*Selected by the CSAA Book Review Committee,
Mary W. Colley, Acting Chairman*

Books for parents

THE PROOF OF THE PUDDING: WHAT CHILDREN READ. By Phyllis Fenner. John Day, 1957. 246 pp. \$3.95. A public school librarian with 32 years' experience writes engagingly about what children like to read and why. There are suggestions for bringing children and books together happily, and well-selected, annotated lists of recent as well as classic books for various ages and for special interests of boys and girls.

SUNSET IDEAS FOR FAMILY CAMPING. By the Editorial Staffs of Sunset Books and Sunset Magazine. Lane Publishing Co., Menlo Park, California, 1957. 128 pp. \$1.75. A useful down-to-earth book on family camping; with equipment lists, instructions for making equipment, how to select camp sites, dangers and how to avoid them. Valuable for any family who believes that a fine experience together may be found in the out-of-doors.

UNDERSTANDING YOUR PARENTS. By Ernest G. Osborne. Association Press, 1956. 122 pp. \$1.75. Although addressed to teenagers, this discussion of their questions and their reports of their problems may be illuminating and helpful to many parents. It is written in a warm and informal style.

Books for those who work with families and children

INTEGRATING SOCIOLOGICAL AND PSYCHOANALYTIC CONCEPTS: An Exploration in Child Psychotherapy. By Otto Pollak. Russell Sage Foundation, 1956. 284 pp. \$4.00. An interdisciplinary approach, which emphasizes the need for greater consideration of the father's role in children's difficulties; also the impact of the grandparents, their personalities and practices, even when they are not directly in the current picture. Case histories illustrate the applicability of this approach.

NEUROTIC INTERACTION IN MARRIAGE.

Edited by Victor W. Eisenstein, M.D. Basic Books, Inc., 1956. 352 pp. \$5.50. A fresh, penetrating and, on the whole, constructive approach to the problem of marriage. Among the many matters considered from the unconscious level are the choice of a mate, children and marital conflict, alcoholism, sexual problems. There are also discussions of various forms of therapy and counseling and several testing techniques which may illuminate the complex causes of marital conflict. The contributors are psychiatrists, psychologists, sociologists, social workers—all of high professional standing.

REMARRIAGE: A Study of Marriage. By Jessie Bernard. Dryden Press, 1956. 372 pp. \$3.75. Professor Bernard, of the University of Pennsylvania, considers remarriage not merely an important social phenomenon in itself but as a means of gaining new insights into many aspects of any marriage. An easy writing style and a refreshingly broad, undogmatic approach to the subject make this study, though admittedly technical, an interesting and surprisingly optimistic book.

Books on special subjects

LEARNING TO LIVE AS A WIDOW. By Marion Langer. Gilbert Press, Inc., distributed by Julian Messner, Inc. 1957. 255 pp. \$3.95. A serious, honest discussion of the emotional impact of a husband's death and how this experience affects a woman's feelings about herself, her late husband, their children, friends, finances, work and finally, remarriage. The widow who reads this book will gain deeper understanding of what she is going through, a sense of companionship with others in her situation and sound ideas for her future guidance.

THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS IN CRISIS. Ed. by Mortimer Smith. Henry Regnery Co., 1956. 164

pp. \$2.75. Compilation of articles by educational leaders discussing the theories and practices of modern public education. The editor calls attention to the need for continuing concern with the content and quality of education as well as the compelling need for expansion of physical facilities.

A NEW LOOK AT READING: A Guide to the Language Arts. By Willard Abraham. Porter Sargent, 1957. 205 pp. Cloth, \$3.50; paper, \$2.75. This book presents contributions from various specialists dealing with techniques and trends in today's teaching of reading, as well as with the sources of reading difficulties. Offers clarification on this currently troubled subject.

READING IN CHILD DEVELOPMENT. By William H. Burton and collaborators Clara Belle Baker and Grace K. Kemp. The Bobbs-Merrill Co., Inc., 1956. 608 pp. \$7.47 This is a comprehensive textbook and guide to methods and resources for teaching reading in all its phases, including the values, goals and classroom procedures of the reading program

there is a good brief discussion of a boy's need for some dependable relationship with a father who cares about him, listens to him, guides him, and enjoys him, and of the difficulty of growing into adult manhood without such a father. Immediately the authors go on, however, to speak of what can be done if this relationship is lacking:

"In all the arguments we hear nowadays about where the responsibility lies for juvenile delinquency in boys, too little is said about the role of fathers. It is noteworthy that whenever correctional treatment of boy delinquency is instituted, greatest emphasis is placed upon providing good father substitutes."

The authors have addressed this book, without undue modesty but with humility, "to those contemplating marriage, those already married and those who have failed once but are ready to try again." No book could answer all the infinitely varied questions about himself and his significant relationships which must assail any thoughtful person, and the authors disclaim any such intention. This one, however, will do the most that a book can do: strengthen and encourage its readers to find their own answers.

HELEN STEERS BURGESS

for the Book Review Committee

Book review

Marriage in the Modern World

By Phillip Polatin, M.D. and

Ellen C. Philtine

New York: J. P. Lippincott, 1956. \$3.95

This book does not fall into either of the traps that await most writers on marriage: the dry well of statistical sociology or the slippery marsh of platitudes and homilies. It is naturally forthright in expression and honest in approach and covers pretty much the entire subject from a personal—i.e. non-historical, non-statistical—point of view, from preparation for marriage, sexuality in all its aspects, natural and adoptive parenthood, to divorce and the difficulties of remarriage. Inclusive as is the table of contents, it gives an inadequate picture of the real worth of the material.

The special value of this book lies in the acceptance by the authors of human beings as *they are*. The reader can thus face with them the many far from ideal aspects of his own, his parents', and his friends' marriages without dismay and with realistic hope. In every instance the discussion is sane and calm and the conclusions constructive, even when dealing with deeply rooted character neuroses.

There is no glossing over of unpleasant facts. But along with such dilemmas, the authors present whatever alternatives there may be. For instance, in the chapter on "The Art of Parenthood"

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